

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 DHA-02 SCS-03

SCA-01 IO-13 NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 /067 W

-----281134 071531 /22

O 280952Z FEB 77

FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4594

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KIGALI 203

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR US UG

SUBJECT: ADVICE AND GOOD OFFICES ON BEHALF OF AMERICANS IN UGANDA

REF (A) STATE 43675 (NOTAL) (B) STATE 42666 (NOTAL)

1. WITHIN AN HOUR AFTER OUR (DELAYED) RECEIPT OF REF. A, HABYARIMANA INTERRUPTED MINISTERIAL MEETING TO DISCUSS SITUATION IN UGANDA WITH ME. I EXPRESSED USG CONCERN PER REFTELS, ADDING THAT WE WOULD BE GRATEFUL FOR ANY INFORMATION OR ADVICE HE MIGHT GIVE. I ALSO NOTED DEPARTMENT HAD CONSIDERED ASKING HIM TO INTERVENE DIRECTLY WITH AMIN BUT HAD THEN DECIDED NOT TO DO SO, GIVEN DELICACY OF RWANDA'S RELATIONS WITH UGANDA.

2. CONCERNING INTERNAL UGANDAN SITUATION, HABYARIMANA SAID GOR WAS CONVINCED THAT THERE HAD IN FACT BEEN A PLOT TO OVERTHROW AMIN -- NOTHING SURPRISING IN THAT, HE OBSERVED --
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AND THAT SIGNIFICANT QUANTITY OF ARMS HAD BEEN INTRODUCED INTO THE COUNTRY FOR THAT PURPOSE. ADDED THERE WERE ALSO CLEAR SIGNS OF "FOREIGN INVOLVEMENT" IN THAT PLOT. GIVEN RECENT CONGRATULATORY TELEGRAM HE SAID SOVIETS HAD SENT TO AMIN WHEN COUP FAILED, GTR WONDERED WHETHER PLOT DID NOT REFLECT EAST-WEST POWER STRUGGLE.

3. I INTERRUPTED TO EXPRESS HOPE THAT HABYARIMANA DID NOT SWALLOW AMIN CHARGES THAT CIA OR ANY OTHER USG AGENCY INVOLVED IN ANY ATTEMPT TO OVERTHROW AMIN, AS IT WAS NOT TRUE. HABYARIMANA BACKED OFF SLIGHTLY, SAID IT CERTAINLY WAS NOT TRUE, BUT REFLECTED THAT SOVIET TELEGRAM WHICH IN EFFECT CONGRATULATED AMIN FOR SLAUGHTERING THOUSANDS OF POLITICAL OPPONENTS WAS VERY "STRANGE".

4. WHAT TO DO NOW? PRESIDENT SAID RWANDA WAS READY TO HELP BY INTERVENING PUBLICLY OR PRIVATELY WITH AMIN BUT WAS OBLIGED TO COUNT POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES. AMIN'S REACTION WAS AT BEST UNPREDICTABLE, AND IF ANGERED HE MIGHT VERY WELL CUT RWANDA'S LIFELINE TO MOMBASA. TO BE FRANK, HE ASKED, WHAT WOULD USG BE PREPARED TO DO TO HELP RWANDA IN THIS EVENTUALITY? PRESIDENT ADDED SAME CONSIDERATION HELD TRUE WERE RWANDA TO BE ASKED TO ASSIST IN EVACUATING AMERICANS FROM UGANDA. RWANDA, HE INSISTED, WAS NOT ASKING TO BE PAID FOR HUMANITARIAN SERVICES TO FRIENDS BUT ONLY WANTED ASSURANCES THAT FRIENDS WOULD HELP IN TURN IF REPRISALS WERE TAKEN AGAINST RWANDA.

5. I ASKED HABYARIMANA WHETHER HE HAD ANY ADVICE TO GIVE US ON DEALING WITH AMIN. HE SAID THAT THE PUBLIC AMIN WAS AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT PERSON FROM THE PRIVATE, THE LATTER BEING ALMOST INVARIABLY REASONABLE AND DECENT. THUS HE URGED OUR USING PRIVATE CHANNELS RATHER THAN PUBLIC ONES. SPECIFICALLY, HE RECOMMENDED WORKING THROUGH PRESIDENT MOBUTU, WHOM HE REGARDED AS AFRICAN LEADER MOST INFLUENTIAL WITH AMIN (BOKASSA LESS SO).

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6. CLOSING CONVERSATION, PRESIDENT AGAIN URGED WE CAREFULLY REFLECT ON POSSIBLE SOVIET MACHINATIONS, REFERRING AGAIN TO "STRANGE" CONGRATULATORY CABLE AND SUGGESTING SOVIETS MIGHT BE STIRRING UP UGANDAN ANIMOSITIES TOWARDS AMERICANS FOR THEIR OWN ENDS.

7. COMMENT: NOTE THAT I DID NOT SPECIFICALLY ASK HABYARIMANA TO INTERVENE BUT ONLY PROMISED THAT I WOULD TRANSMIT HIS CONSIDERATIONS AND COMMENTS TO WASHINGTON. I PERSONALLY DO NOT BELIEVE WE SHOULD ASK HIM TO DO SO, AS HIS INFLUENCE IS NEGLIGIBLE COMPARED TO THE HARM WHICH AMIN COULD DO TO RWANDA. HOWEVER, WE COULD AND SHOULD ASK GOR HELP IN EVENT IT IS NEEDED FOR EVACUATION PURPOSES OR OTHER PASSIVE FUNCTION.

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Message Attributes

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Control Number: n/a
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Sent Date: 28-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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